

To: Honorable Judiciary Committee

From: Stephen Estes, Andover, Ct.

I ask that the Judiciary Committee vote against SB-16 and HB-5416, and concurrently vote in the affirmative for SB-388, HB-5415 and HB-5412.

My name is Stephen Estes. I have been a police officer in Ct. for over 30 years, retiring as a Lt. from West Hartford after 26 years, and since then working for 2 other agencies as a Patrol Officer. SB-16 will do nothing to curtail crime in Ct. It will simply add onerous restrictions to law-abiding citizens, who are not the ones committing the crimes. The bill has a catchy title "An Act Addressing Gun Violence and Juvenile Crime". First off, there is no such thing as "Gun Violence". That is a manufactured term designed to conflate 2 otherwise unrelated items. People are violent. Therein lies my first point: Address the offenders who are actually preying on society. It is amazing to me to see someone charged with Criminal Possession of a Firearm, or Carrying a Pistol Without a Permit, and yet the prosecutors let those charges go. In order to be charged with Criminal Possession of a Firearm, that individual has to be a convicted felon already. Why is he not in jail? Then by definition he cannot legally purchase a firearm. So the bottom line is that criminals don't obey the laws we have. Yet this bill would punish the very people who are abiding by the law. Secondly, the legislature made every citizen in this state less safe by passing the Police Accountability Bill. This law has effectively told us cops that the less we do the better off we are, because the legislature hates us and took away protections that allowed us to do our jobs in relative security. We aren't being proactive because of that law. So if you want to truly have safer streets, then repeal that law and watch what happens. Closely related to that is the mess that the legislature made of Juvenile Justice laws over the last 10-12 years. Every cop in the state was telling you guys, and Fran Carino was singing it from the rooftops; that if you fundamentally altered the traditional ways of Juvenile Justice in Ct. (juvenile age was 15 and below, Long Lane was in existence, juvenile offenders were held at Broad St. ,and in Bridgeport etc.), that this state would see a spike in juvenile crime. Look at what we have- exactly that. Let's get into a favorite term lately " Follow the Science". Banning AR-15's and "Others" will do NOTHING in Ct. to reduce crime. Look at the FBI UCR reports. Knives and fists kill way more people than ALL rifles, and AR's are an infinitesimally small piece of the rifle category. So "Follow the Science" and throw out this bill all together. Finally, the legislature would have to be absolutely tone-deaf to international events to enact gun control legislation while the tiny nation of Ukraine is fighting for its very existence by arming its everyday citizens in the war against the Russians. On to HB-5416: there are no cases in CT. that I have heard about where limiting firearms purchases to an arbitrary number per time-frame would stop crime. Enforce the laws on the books now and watch crime go down. Punish these 16-17 year olds as adults like when I started my LE career and watch crime go down. Demand accountability from these teens and watch crime go down. Do not create more laws which simply punish the hard working taxpayers of this state. Oh, and did I mention that this is an election year? Have you guys been paying attention to what is going to occur

on the national level and that the down-ballot wave which will surely follow will affect those of you who vote against the Constitutional rights of Ct. citizens?

Now on to the good stuff. I want you to support SB-388, HB-5415 and HB-5416. Those bills are all good ones for the law-abiding, hard-working people of this state. Being able to reasonably defend one's self in a motor vehicle like in your home or workplace makes a ton of sense. Having no duty to retreat in a house of worship is also a necessary aspect of modern life. For those who already can legally possess standard capacity magazines and modern sporting rifles, they should be able to engage in transactions with others who are also legal.